LITERARY LIONS IN THEIR LAIR

THE GENERAL PUBLIC LOOKS IN AT THE AUTHORS CLUB.

Talk Overheard on Ladies' Day—Irving Bacheller Tells About the Cheerful Yankees—Also the Silent Yankee—Romance of the Worm and the Angel.

As everybody knows, the real lair of the real authors of America is the Authors Club of New York. Twice within the last seven days outsiders have enjoyed the privilege of talking to and observing some of the real authors in their lair. The first occasion was on a ladies' day, and they feasted merrily on tea and other strengthening viands. The second was when Irving Bacheller taked about "The Cheerful Yankee" until they wept. On ladies' day, after having successfully passed the colored committee of one on credentials, just within the door, a visitor came upon Duffield Osborne in the act of exhibiting the photograph album of the club to three of the general public.

"This is our baby, our club baby," Mr. Osborne was saying, with all the pride of a fond father beaming in his face.

"Why—ah," observed one of the three of the general public. "Can he write? That is, I mean books."

"Yes," echoed the other two of the three. "That's it. Books."

"Can he!" exclaimed Mr. Osborne, and again his face radiated parental pride. "Well I should say he could! Why, only last year he published the 'Retrospections of an Active Life,' in two large volumes."

The visitor peering between shoulders recognized the photograph of John Bigelow, the latest member admitted to the club.

"This man must be a Congressman—he looks just like one," one of the general public remarked, as she flipped over several leaves in the album. "It's autographed W. A. White. Who is W. A. White?"

"That's Will Allen White. Oh, you know him," Mr. Osborne said.

"Why, no, I don't," the lady assured him. "Did he ever write anything? I mean books."

"Indeed he has," the second lady asserted, with the air of one taking the part of a dear friend. "He's a muckraker too, and he wouldn't thank anybody for taking him for a Congressman."

The visitor slipped further into the clubroom.

"I lunched with Gifford Pinchot to-day," the Rev. Thomas Slicer was saying to Dr. Louis Livingston Seaman.

"Well, what did he have to say for himself?" Dr. Seaman inquired, all the while stirring a cup of tea in which three slices of lemon were jostling each other.

"Oh, conservation, conservation," Dr. Slicer answered. "And I told him if he would only invent some apt phrase embodying the idea of conservation half his battle would be won."

"Well, I told a lot of those fellows the other night that I'd heard them talk about conserving everything else in the country, but I hadn't heard a word about conserving health," was Dr. Seaman's reply. "I think it is about time for somebody to begin to talk about conserving health."

"They touched on that to-day. Maybe they got it from you," Dr. Slicer came back at him.

"Maybe they did. Somebody is always appropriating my ideas. Have a cup of tea?" he said, bowing before an elderly member of the general public. "Do take this cup of tea."

"No, I thank you," she said, drawing away as from a cup of poison. "I'm on a diet. I mustn't touch another thing."

"Oh," said Dr. Seaman, gazing gloomily into the cup as he stirred the tea vigorously, "and I brought this tea from China."

"Then give it to me," said a younger member of the general public. "I've seen you running around the room with it ever since I came but I didn't know you had brought it from China."

And she took the cup and going back to the tea table placed it thereon.

"I suppose your publishers pay you as much as 25 per cent.," Henry Holt was saying, and he too was busily stirring a cup of tea in which floated several slices of lemon.

"Oh, no," the woman writer assured him. "I only get the sliding scale beginning with fifteen."

"Never ask any more," Mr. Holt advised. "When a publisher offers you more be cautious. You don't want to get mixed up in a failure."

"Are you talking about stocks?" one of the general public inquired, joining Mr. Holt and the writer.

"No, books," the writer replied.

"How delightful!" this part of the general public exclaimed, her face beaming with smiles. "I'm awfully fond of talking about books."

"Excuse me," apologized Mr. Holt. "I see a guest over there to whom I have not yet spoken."

"Which is Thomas Nelson Page?" It was a clear young voice and high pitched. Of course it belonged to the general public.

She was standing near the door peering into the dusk of the clubroom. It was evident that this was her first visit to the lair and she had come in eager expectation of hearing the lions all roaring at once.

"He isn't here."

"Oh, I'm so sorry." The tone was as high as ever, though now it sounded as if the owner was about to give way to tears.

"Is that his picture?" she went on, glancing around the walls. "Oh, a crayon of Edgar Allan Poe. Is he an author too? He's got a darling mustache. I'm going to get Sidney to train his just like it."

It was last Tuesday that Irving Bacheller talked about "The Cheerful Yankee." On this occasion the lair was filled with camp chairs and in every chair sat one of the general public, with a sprinkling of real authors standing about in the corners and niches.

More than one visitor was surprised when Mr. Bacheller came in with Henry Holt, for instead of an elderly gentleman wearing gold rimmed glasses the author of "Eben Holden" appeared little more than a blond boy who having put on a few extra pounds of flesh in a spirit of mischief had also donned his grandfather's white hair. As Mr. Bacheller took his seat Mr. Holt stopped at the reading desk and explained that having a few minutes to talk he had decided to say something about the naming of babies.

It is a well known fact, Mr. Holt declared, if a baby was named Blanche she would invariably grow up to have dark eyes and black hair, whereas name her Brunhilda and she surely would turn out a veritable blonde. Name her Mignon and she would attain the height of six feet. Mrs. Bacheller, the mother of the author of "Eben Holden," had met with the usual luck when she called her son Irving.

Then Mr. Holt sat down and Mr. Bacheller stood up.

Among the characteristics of the Cheerful Yankees Mr. Bacheller mentioned was their determination to have enemies. If they could get them no other way they invented them. Among these inventions he unumerated the stinging cod and the lion of Plymouth forest. Mr. Bacheller's father had seen a man who claimed to have been badly stung by a cod, while numerous other persons had seen a man who was sure he had met the lion in Plymouth forest.

Another characteristic, and that to which present day Yankees owe the prosperity of the country, was that they were born fighters. They smoothed the soil, cleared the forest and conquered their enemies, even the stinging cod and the lion of Plymouth, as part of the campaign which they mapped out when leaving the old world and coming to the new. They were tireless workers, yet all their songs were of a rest that they never experienced. Then the author described his recollection of his mother as she walked back and forth at her loom singing:

I have fitted up a mansion,
In the sweet fields of Eden
On the other side of Jordan
There'll be rest for you.

So continuous was the labor of these first cheerful Yankees that a day's illness was looked on almost as a blessing because it gave the sick one an opportunity to take the longed for rest. For the cheerful Yankee there was but one way and that the straight and narrow one, which was like a tight rope stretched across a chasm, death and destruction everywhere except straight ahead.

Illustrating the cheerful Yankee of the present Mr. Bacheller gave three of his own experiences. The first was with the man who talked all day without getting anywhere, the second with the silent variety of cheerful Yankee.

While walking through the country with one of these silent ones the author had remarked upon the number of deer tracks.

"Boy," replied the silent Yankee, "a deer has four feet. Every time he steps he puts them all down."

Later on, when the silent one exhibited an old scar, the result of an encounter with a panther, the author remarked that it must have hurt pretty bad.

"No," said the silent one. "I hurt him." That was all, never another word.

The third of the present day cheerful Yankees was met while the author was taking an automobile trip through New England. On the side of a hill the author came upon an old man seated beside a tiny house much older than the man. Above, on what appeared to be an almost perpendicular ledge, there was growing a beautiful field of grain.

"How did you get that grain up there?" the author asked of the old man.

"Shot it with a musket," was the cheerful rejoinder.

"Is that the truth?"

"No, that's conversation."

"I suppose there have been a good many changes in this part of the world," the author ventured again.

"Now, young man, you've taken the top off the pickle jar," the cheerful one replied. "Why, when I grew up all down in those valleys and on those hills were farms and a village. Then the people all began to move west, until it seemed like everybody almost had gone west.

"You see that grand stone mansion down there? Well, that's Jackson Bird's. He went to school with me. When he used to talk to folks he would look at their neck. People use to call him an inspector of Adam's apples.

"He went West and a few years ago he came back here and bought the old farm and built that mansion. His father had a large family, thirteen children. Now Jackson has thirteen horses, eighteen dogs and one child, with a hired mother to look after that child. Every Sunday Jackson and his guests on the horses with the dogs go racing through the valley and over the hills chasing happiness.

"In my day we didn't have to chase happiness; happiness chased us. Some days she didn't catch us until night came. When I was a boy all we had to do to feel happy was to rest our head on our arm and drop off to sleep. That was happiness.

"The preacher didn't give us an opportunity to forget what we had been sent into this world for. Why, he used to tell us boys that our father was corruption and our mother a worm. He made us feel like worms too.

"When I was a boy we were all afraid. Children were afraid of their parents the parents of the preacher and the preacher afraid of us all. The boys were afraid of the girls and the girls of the boys. The way they used to punish the bad boys in school was to make them sit with the girls. It cured us too.

"When we grew up that fear remained with us. That's the reason there are so many unmarried men and women in New England to-day. You'll find wherever you go an old maid in this house and an old bachelor in that. I'm one of them. I live here with my sister.

"Maybe if I hadn't been so strongly impressed with being a worm I might have married. When an angel came into my life it didn't seem possible that she would look at a worm. I was ashamed of my love for her and it took a long time for me to get up courage to ask her.

"When at last I did I went down to see her. It was one evening and they told me she had gone. I thought some of following her, but I couldn't make up my mind to offer an angel a worm; could you?

"Did you ever meet Barbara Mason down in New York? She was a friend of mine. She went down there years ago. I thought you might have heard of her," the old man explained; then he stopped as if thinking.

While the conversation was going on the author had noticed an automobile come up the hill. It stopped near the house and a young man helped out an old woman. As they came up the path the woman asked:

"Does Henry Southwick live here?"

"That's my name," the old man answered, rising.

"Why, Henry, I'm Barbara, Barbara Mason," the old woman called to him.

The old man put out his hands, groping. For the first time the author realized that he was blind.

"Barbara, Barbara Mason, come here," he said; "I want to see you."

When the old woman went to him he ran his fingers over her wrinkled face and whitening hair.

"I see you," he assured her, smiling. "I see you. Your hair is as yellow as a corn tassel, your cheeks are red and smooth and your eyes as blue as the sky was that day we took our last walk together.

"Do you remember that last walk we took in the forest, Barbara? It will be fifty-four years ago come the 17th of next June. The valley and the hills looked just as they do to-day. I see them. I see them all."

MRS. HELEN S. WRIGHT.

This is Mrs. Helen S. Wright, who has told of Arctic explorations in her book, "The Great White North," which the Macmillans publish. She is the daughter of Rear Admiral David Smith, who served in the navy for forty years and was a personal friend of Admiral Melville. He accompanied Melville on one of his northern voyages, and although Mrs. Wright has never been much further north than Pittsfield, Mass., where she lives, she made good use of the stories of the hardships men faced in the frozen countries as told by her father and Admiral Melville. She says that she first grew to love the north when she was only 9 years old, and Admiral Melville gave her a book on Arctic explorations that fired her imagination.

Spectacles Worn by "Tibby."

From the London Globe.

Burns's cottage has recently come into possession of an interesting relic of the poet. It is the gift of W. Dalgleish Bellasis and there is little doubt as to its genuineness. The relic is the spectacles worn by "Tibby," the subject of a somewhat caustic song beginning "Oh, Tibby, I hae seen the day."

Tibby was Isabella Stein, whose father farmed land in the vicinity of Lochlee, Burns's father's farm, in the parish of Tarbolton. Burns says he wrote the song when he was 17 years old, so it is thought that if Tibby required the spectacles she must have long outlived the bard.

The Cock Lane Ghost.

From the Westminster Gazette.

St. John's, Clerkenwell, to which the Duke of Connaught has just appointed a new rector, is a mean structure architecturally, but possesses two interesting historical associations, one romantic and the other ludicrous.

It is the headquarters of the Order of St. John of Jerusalem, part of the choir of whose ancient priory can still be seen in the early English crypt. This crypt was the haunt of the "Cock Lane Ghost," which excited all London in February, 1762, and attracted Johnson, Goldsmith and Horace Walpole. The "ghost" proved, as Dr. Johnson surmised, to be the mischievous little daughter of a parish clerk.

"Rock of Ages."

From the London Chronicle.

Augustus Montague Toplady, whose biography is being written by Thomas Wright, is remembered to-day merely as the author of that world famous hymn "Rock of Ages." This hymn originally appeared in the *Gospel Magazine* for October, 1775, and was prefaced by a terrifying list of the number of sins the average man may be supposed to commit during the course of his lifetime.

"At 10 years old," computes the morbid mathematician who wrote the article, "each of us is chargeable with 315,058,000 sins. At 20 with 630,720,000." And so on until at 80 the list stands at 2,552,880,000.

Oxford Professorship of Poetry.

From the Westminster Gazette.

The chair of poetry at Oxford, for which three bards contend, was founded about two centuries ago by Dr. Henry Birkhead, a high church barrister, who had been elected fellow of All Souls through the influence of Laud. He left lands in Durham for the endowment, but the property was foolishly sold, with the result that this professorship, which can be held for not more than ten years and not twice successively by men from the same college, is now one of the poorest in the university.

Among [illegible] professors have been [illegible] Matthew Arnold.

A LAWYER AND A BUSY WRITER

NINE CROWDED YEARS OF WILLIAM HAMILTON OSBORNE.

Wrote His First Story on a Wager and Followed It With 449 More and Three Novels—Why Lawyers Can't Write the Best Law Stories About Law.

This is a suitable time to interview William Hamilton Osborne, as it was nine years ago this month that he began his literary side practice. Side practice he avers it to be, though the fact that he has published 450 short stories in that time, besides three long novels, might almost make it a real profession in the eyes of some; but a man who used the morning of the Lincoln's Birthday holiday last week to run off a couple of short stories, who often averages a story a night for several weeks, who published 106 stories in the first year of this side activity, who wrote the novel "The Red Mouse" in ten sittings within one month and "The Running Fight" in twelve sittings within the same space of time is not to be judged by usual standards.

For in spite of all this Mr. Osborne is by profession a lawyer and not a writer, a practising lawyer in New Jersey and New York, with an experience extending over sixteen years. Cornered in his office in Nassau street, he allows himself to be separated from some interesting theories as to the correlation of law and literature, although he has just related how repute has it that he cannot be separated from anything and how it lost him membership in the Easy Mark Society.

"The only claim to real fame I have," he says, "is that I am, or was, an associate member of the Easy Mark Society. This society was formed by, I think, Mr. Ellis Parker Butler and is composed of literary people who have allowed themselves to be swindled by a certain gentleman who went about the country assuming the names of editors of magazines and patting authors on the back and borrowing money. I was made an associate member because he tried to get $1.67 from me—and didn't get it; because it was thought at the time that his not getting it was an accident.

"Since then, I am informed, the matter has been discussed among the members of the Easy Mark Society, and they have expelled me on the ground that it was not an accident; they say I cannot be separated from $1.67. Being therefore ineligible as an Easy Mark, I have dropped back into innocuous desuetude."

But for the theory.

"When I first began to write short stories," says the lawyer, "the editor of a well known magazine to whom I had submitted a number sent for me one day and looked me over.

"'Where,' he inquired, 'did you get your intimate knowledge of the methods of the New York Police Department?'

"I didn't have time to think. If I had I might under certain circumstances have told him gravely that I had been associated in business with a man who had had several years experience as an Assistant District Attorney of New York, that I had a natural taste for subjects involving crime, that my instinct lay that way. I might have told many things to indicate my extreme fitness to make a close study of detective bureaus. But unfortunately I didn't have time to think and told him the truth.

"'My knowledge of police methods? Why, from the columns of THE SUN,' I replied without hesitation.

"He lost interest in my stories immediately; I was getting my information at second hand. He was looking for people who knew the inside of the Police Department at first hand. I didn't sell him any more stories built around the police.

"I am not so sure that he was right. I am not so sure that I was wrong. What I mean is this," and the lawyer settles down to giving out his theory regarding stories of crime written by lawyers. "It often happens that the man who knows the inside of a given business is the one least likely to portray it interestingly.

"You would assume that it takes a lawyer to write a first class law story, the story of a trial, of legal intrigue. Perhaps you are right. But it seems otherwise.

"To the lawyer so much of the law business is commonplace that he forgets the details. These details, commonplace as they are, seem often the most dramatic to the public. The machinery is only machinery to the lawyer; to the public the machinery itself is a swiftly moving drama.

"I would rather read a law story written by a reporter than a law story written by a lawyer. It is the reporter's business to catch everything, details included, for the public to catch and hold it. He sees everything.

"I go into the house of a friend who keeps a loudly ticking clock. Whenever I am there that clock tick beats into my consciousness, ominously, stridently, punctuating everything that is said or done, emphasizing everything. The clock pursues me relentlessly.

"It depresses me; it haunts me. It is a part, a big part, of my experience in visiting that man. I have never heard a clock tick just like that clock. As for my friend, he never hears it. He is so used to it that for him it does not exist.

"If I were to write a story around that room it would be a gruesome story and the clock would play a weird part. If my friend were to write the story the clock would never be mentioned.

"The things that impress a lawyer during the conduct of a case or while watching a trial are the big things. Frequently they are not as dramatic to the outsider as are the little things.

"Given a sufficient knowledge of legal terms, given a reporter who has never entered a court room and a lawyer who is familiar with it, and given to both of these the same ability to portray happenings in a graphic manner, I should prefer the reporter's account of the proceedings. If Charles Dickens had been more of a lawyer and less of a reporter he never could have written Bardel against Pickwick; never could have placed on his canvas with such close attention to detail his scenes at the Old Bailey and in the court rooms of illiterate police judges.

"The surgeon performing a capital operation probably forgets that there is such a thing as a chloroform cone; to him the only thing of interest is the vital thing, the thing he is engaged in doing.

"And yet, of course, a lot of our best writers are lawyers," adds the writer-lawyer modestly, "and they are successful in turning the trick. The difficulty that the layman meets is this, he thinks he knows when he really does not know the law.

"The lawyer of course excels here. He will not admit a man to bail when he is charged with murder in the first degree; he will not have a deed or a will executed without the proper formalities; he does not say Supreme Court when he should say Sessions. The layman does these things, and if he writes for laymen it makes little difference.

"But if a layman writes a book built around the law and expects lawyers to read it he must not be surprised to find that they will at once detect the raw hand in its makeup. You know the general public will admit its ignorance of chemistry, surgery, medicine, electricity, anything; but the public insists that one of the subjects it knows all about is law. A friend of mine informed me glibly that if a debtor paid his creditor on Sunday the payment was illegal and the latter could get his money all over again.

"Now all this does not destroy the theory I first set up, that the outsider sees the drama as it is. And I am right, because if the outsider, the layman, writes down just what he sees and hears in a trial, say, he can't go wrong. If he draws on his own ignorance he is bound to go wrong.

"Let me tell you one of the most dramatic things that happens in the course of almost every trial.

"The Judge on the bench invariably pays more attention to the arguments of the losing side than to those of the winning side. Why? The winning side has already convinced him. It is up to the loser to shake the conviction.

"What is the result? The counsel for the losing side, with sickening heart, is thus permitted to do most of the wrangling. The court silences the winning lawyer with a wave of the hand; he doesn't care to hear him, and this lawyer's face wreathes itself in smiles. But what about the clients?

"The losing client, seeing that his lawyer is being permitted to do all the talking, beams with delight. The winning client, grumbling in despair, leans over to his lawyer and whispers that the Judge must be bought by the other side, for he won't let them say a word. Thus a glum client and a happy lawyer on one side, a happy client and a struggling lawyer on the other.

"Just about the time that the losing client has come to the conclusion that his lawyer has bought the court, and about the time that the winning client is sure that the other side has bought not only the court but his lawyer as well, presto, change! the decision is announced and the latter wins.

"Now this is a bit of drama that it is true a lawyer and only a lawyer can fully appreciate.

"'I do not care to hear you' from the court means victory; but the public understands it very differently.

"That only strengthens what I said before: that those silent dramas that are the most interesting to the lawyer, and the more technical they are, the more dramatic, do not interest the public. In the law the big things are usually the simple things; big things and interesting things in the public sense do not often, in the law, go hand in hand.

"I think the big law novel of the age, 'Ten Thousand a Year' to the contrary notwithstanding, will be written by a newspaper man who sees everything and puts it down as he finds it, tinged with the charm of his own peculiar personality."

The lawyer-author's latest book—that is the latest at the hour of interviewing, which cannot be set down as a finality in his case, will be published in March. It is entitled "The Cat's Paw," and has to do with a gentleman burglar. The play of which he is coauthor, and which has been on the road this season, also bears a suggestive title, "The Prosecutor."

The literary impulse which has kept Mr. Osborne's leisure moments so full of activity for the past nine years first struck him after reading an article written on the short story in the *Saturday Evening Post*. This article said that a good average price for a short story was $10 a thousand words. The lawyer made a bet with a friend that he could write a short story and sell it. He did, and followed it with 105 others that first year, and others continuously since. They have appeared, he thinks, in all the magazines and newspapers in the East, and in some in the West. And that first wager story has a little story all its own attached.

"After I wrote it I sent it to a well known magazine that accepted it inside a week," says the author. "I had a second all written for submission before they sent the first one back. After accepting it they had read it to a business man who stopped them in the middle and finished the story for them.

"They didn't know me—how much of a thief I was—they naturally were cautious and they returned the story. I sent it to another editor with an explanation and the editor accepted it. He had no sooner published it than a literary woman in Chicago wrote in that her story had now been stolen seven times and that I was the seventh thief. She also sent on her story, and there was a decided similarity, particularly in the ending. I have always maintained my innocence.

"However, that was not the end of that story. An English newspaper afterward published without credit to me and under another name my story in full, changing only names and figures. That made the eighth steal, I suppose.

"But that was not all. A New York newspaper, controlled by the owner of the magazine that first accepted and then rejected my story, in the process of exchange borrowed the story from the English paper and published the story, after all, one bright Sunday morning. This must have been the ninth time it had been—well, published."

FRANK SPEARMAN.

This is Frank H. Spearman, some time railroad man, banker, business man and politician, according to his own admission, and writer of books about the West mostly. He went as a delegate to the Democratic national convention and saw that Grover Cleveland was renominated all right in 1892, and when he had finished that little job he sat down and wrote a piece about things economic. That's how he got started, and thereafter his productions appeared in "boiler plate" in country newspapers and railroad time tables and the literature of correspondence schools, and once Mr. Underwood of the Erie printed at his own expense a story that Spearman wrote about railroads.

His first novel came out in 1902, and after that he wrote two more, one of them "Whispering Smith," which, as you may remember, was all about gun fighting in the West and people getting shot through and through.

Mr. Spearman went to Italy recently, and there he started on his new book, "Robert Kimberly," a story of finance, which Charles Scribner's Sons bring out this week. Mr. Spearman lives in Evanston, Ill., and in the picture you see him in his library there.

JEFFERY FARNOL'S TWO ARTS.

Painted Theatre Scenery and Wrote "The Broad Highway" in New York.

So much praise has been bestowed by the English reviewers on Jeffery Farnol, author of the novel "The Broad Highway," that curiosity has been aroused concerning him. It was an exceedingly modest, smooth shaven young man of about 30, with dark hair and eyes, short in stature but of an athletic build, whom the English interviewer discovered at work in a pretty cottage off the beaten highway of Kent, the same Kent which Mr. Farnol depicts in "The Broad Highway."

"I was born in Warwickshire, but I left Shakespeare's country in early boyhood to settle in Kent," he said in reply to questions. "I have been to the United States; indeed, 'The Broad Highway' was written there. That was seven years ago, you know, and as I am somewhat of an artist, when I found that my literary wares were in no great demand, why I turned my hand to scene painting at the Astor Theatre.

"No, 'The Broad Highway' is not actually my first book, for when I was in the States I sold a story to one of the magazines bearing the title 'Chronicles of the Imp,' afterward issued in book form as 'My Lady Caprice.' I wrote 'The Broad Highway' when free from my labors as stage painter, and I offered it to a New York publisher, but I was told that it would never go in America. This so discouraged me that I did not submit it elsewhere, but brought it back with me when I came home.

"It was some time before I had the courage to offer it to a London publisher, but one day a good friend of mine read the manuscript and gave me some advice which I profited by. I took it to the firm that brought out 'Lorna Doone,' and you may be assured that I was pleased to have it accepted.

"Clement Shorter spoke very kindly of the story in the *Sphere* long before it came out, and the other critics have been most generous in their reviews. My publishers tell me that the third English edition has been exhausted and that over in America, where the book was to be issued about three months later, unusual interest had been aroused.

"I have had an inclination toward story telling since my boyhood days, but as I preferred talking to writing it has not been very remunerative" this with a whimsical smile. "I recall that when I was at school I told the boys a tale that lasted the whole term.

"I love every inch of Kent, and I have walked and cycled over the greater part of it; in fact for many years I have spent most of my spare time on the highways and byways of Kent and Surrey and Essex. I have made friends with all manner of men, finding much wisdom veiled in corduroy and homespun. Peter Vibart, my hero, the philosophical tinker, the old barrier who lost his leg at Vittoria, Gabbling Dick, the pedler; the Ancient, Black George, the smith, and Perfessional Sambo are all very real to me."

Mr. Farnol has read widely and naturally admires the works of Borrow, one of the thirteen or more authors to whom the English reviewers have compared him.

"I am glad the public like 'The Broad Highway,'" he said in bringing the interview to a close, "for I am at work on another romance dealing with the days of the Prince Regent which I think corrects the faults of the earlier book."

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JEFFERY FARNOL.